Depot Town Rag

July 1989

1850-1859 - Secession
Fourth of July
Festival Ethicals
NO JAZZ ?
Festival Facts
and lots more local newz

A Publication of the DEPOT TOWN ASSOCIATION, INC. The Old Caboose, 400 Market Place, Ypsilanti, MI 48198

Ann Arbor convention planners visit Depot Town

Contemporary Depot Towners love to reminisce of the days when the Follett House was the grandest hotel between Detroit and Chicago and they often feel that those days are gone forever. But, when the sales managers of Ann Arbor's hotels toured the district last month with officials from the Ann Arbor Convention and Visitors Bureau, it seemed likely that those elegant days may soon return to the district's tourism industry.

Starting their monthly sales meeting on a Wednesday afternoon in the Freight House Coffee Shop, representatives included Ypsilanti's new Radisson and Ann Arbor's Ramada, Days Inn, Howard Johnsons, Brookshire Hilton, Campus Inn, Holiday Inn West and the Hampton Inns.

Ypsilanti Chamber of Commerce president, Dan Tennow, welcomed the group to "the east side of US-23," as they assembled in the century old Freighthouse at the end of the Farmers' Market day.

Depot Town's food services were shown off in their best light with coffee at the Coffeeshop and such *specialties of the house* as Aubree's Saloon's quesadillas, pizza slices from the Red Rooster, finger burritos at The Mean Bean Café, roast turkey and bread sticks at the Old Town, cones at Miller's Ice Cream Parlor, carnations from Hon's and hamburg samples and cheesecake from the Sidetrack.

The Ann Arbor Bureau's Barb Barden, said,. "I heard our sales managers say over and over, 'I had no idea all this was here!' They have really discovered something unique in their own sales area."

After a tour of Miller Motors, the convention planners toured the Historic East Side in Aubree's Nightcrawler.

Mary Kerr, manager of the Ypsilanti Visitors & Convention Bureau said, "In all my years in the food business, I have never seen such a throrough presentation. Depot Town's restauranteurs are real pros."

Reprise:
Upstairs, Downtown

Owners of Red Rooster Pizza & Dairy Bar, Rick & Brenda Abdullah, have followed Depot Town's tradition as well as the tradition of Rick's native Yemen: living upstairs over the store.

The May RAG pointed out that only one of the 41 apartments in the district was used in this manner today (Kornilakis/Old Town Restaurant), but that number has doubled in only one month.

Infant son, Mohammad, will experience another cross-cultural tie: being 'babysat" by part of his extended family. Rick's sister, Afra, will be in charge of the upper floor during the regular pizza business day.

Although the stairway which once entered the prescription room at Weber Drug has been removed, the Abdullahs have easy access upstairs to the glassed-in porch at the rear of their recently remodeled apartment.

The tradition continues.

Dock Dedicated
1876 -1989

The Railroad Freighthouse was constructed in 1876 by the Michigan Central Railroad as a transfer terminal for railroad freight destined for and originating from the Ypsilanti area.

The original Freighthouse dock carried a variety of freight, contributing to the development, growth and good life of the Ypsilanti area. Over the years, this freight included factory machinery, manufactured goods, automobiles, produce, clothing, and furniture.

On six successive Saturdays in the spring of 1989, through the rain, snow and sunshine, over thrity-five community volunteers reconstructed this historic railroad structure as it was originally built -- to be used and enjoyed by the residents and visitors of the Ypsilanti area for many generations to come.

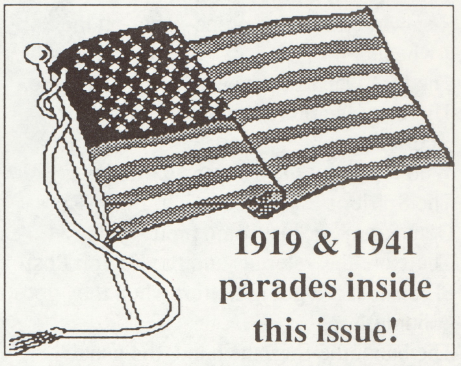
The dock was rededicated on June 10, 1989 with copious thanks to the many volunteers.

50 years ago

Last call for information

1939 train wreck at Ypsilanti
Testimonials sought

The August issue of *The Depot Town Rag* will feature facts and testimony about the Great Train Wreck of 1939. Anyone wishing to help should contact the editor via the mail slot in The Old Caboose or call 482-6371.



1919 & 1941 parades inside this issue!

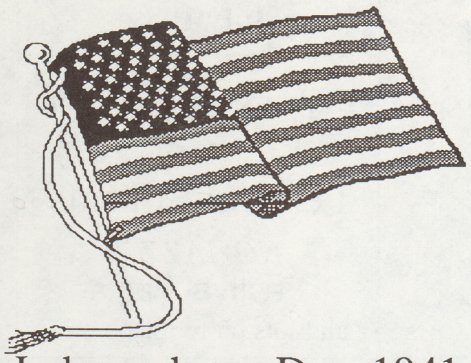
Ypsilanti loves a parade!

The **Memorial Day Procession** stops on the Cross Street Bridge on its annual pilgrimage to Highland Cemetery. Local school bands and veterans' organizations brought Norman Rockwell's America back to Ypsilanti once more.

This year's **Independence Day Parade** ends at the Cross Street Bridge to re-dedicate the World War markers and honor its parade marshals: the surviving soldiers of The Great War. Many of the floats and vehicles from the parade will park on Frog Island for closer inspection during the family picnics which will continue there and across the walking bridge in Riverside park.

The 11th annual **Heritage Parade** will bypass the Bridge this year, in order to permit more displays in Depot Town on East Cross Street, but it will pass right by the top of the hill at Cross and North Huron before it dissembles.

Ypsilanti loves a parade!



Independence Day, 1941

Copyright 1941, by Stephen Vincent Benet

(Benet didn't live in Ypsilanti, but he could have. Now we just have to get a new Norman Rockwell to paint the scene. -ed)

This is Independence Day,
Fourth of July, the day we mean to keep,
Whatever happens and whatever falls
Out of a sky grown strange;
This is firecracker day for sunburnt kids,
The day of the parade,
Slambanging down the street.
Listen to the parade!
There's J. K. Burney's float,
Red-white-and-blue crepe-paper on the wheels,
The Fire Department and the local Grange,
There are the pretty girls with their hair curled
Who represent the Thirteen Colonies,
The Spirit of East Greenwich, Betsy Ross,
Democracy, or just some pretty girls.
There are the veterans and the Legion Post
(Their feet are going to hurt when they get home),
The band, the flag, the band, the usual crowd,
Good-humored, watching, hot,
Silent a second as the flag goes by,
Kidding the local cop and eating popsicles,
Jack Brown and Rosie Shapiro and Dan Shay,
Paul Bunchick and the Greek who runs the Greek's.,
The black-eyed children out of Sicily,
The girls who giggle and the boys who push,
All of them there and all of them a nation.
And, afterwards,
There'll be ice-cream and fireworks and a speech
By Somebody, the Honorable Who,
The lovers will pair off in the kind dark
And Tessie Jones, our honor-graduate,
Will read the Declaration.
That's how it is. It's always been that way.
That's our Fourth of July, through war and peace,
That's our Fourth of July.

(. . . and that's the way we still do it in Ypsilanti, Michigan. -ed)

1850-1859 : The Secession of the East Side:

1st depot, 1st Cross Street Bridge, secession, reunification, 1st City Hall , all hotly contested as the start of a long and rich tradition of argument

Excerpts from Colburn's

The Story of Ypsilanti

Published in 1923 for the Centennial Celebration of the Founding of the City, in Cooperation with the Committee on History composed of Carl E. Pray, Mrs. P.R. Cleary, and Miss Florence Shultes. More excerpts will follow in the August, September and October Rags.

About 1860 Left toRight: - - old City Hall, Cross Street Bridge, Flour Mill, Follet House, Depot Town

It had been inevitable from the beginning of the settlement that a not altogether friendly rivalry should grow up between the East and the West Sides, a sentiment of which traces seem yet to linger. The two quite separate tracts of land being held by differeent proprietors, there resulted competition in the sale of lots and mutual jealousy over the location of improvements. One cause of estrangement was the location of the railway station, it being conceived at the time that business development would be stimulated in its vicinity. The victory of the East Side, however, eventually proved to be barren. The existence of two distinct business centers, removed from each other by a distance of several blocks, was destructive to community unity. During the period of the united village government, there was an inextinguishable fear that one side or the other would receive inadeaquate return for the amount of taxes it paid into the common treasury. When a proposal was made to open Cross Street to the river and bridge the stream, it was violently opposed and several times defeated. It was only when Mark Norris agreed to bear a considerable share of the expense of procuring the land and grading the approach that this needed work was undertaken. The sentiment of jealousy finally became so violent that, on the petition of the East-siders, the portion of the village plat on that side of the river was vacated and set back into Ypsilanti Township. The East Side thus seceded from the village. During the few years that this state of things continued, it is said that the ill will between

(continued on page three)

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56 East Cross Street
483-1053

Aubree's Saloon & Second Floor
39 East Cross Street

Red Rooster Pizza
and Dairy Bar
37 East Cross • 483-4555

(Continued from page two) the two sides greatly subsided. In 1857, a census was taken by which it was found that there were fifteen hundred inhabitants east of the river. A meeting of citizens was held, resulting in the incorporation of what was then a portion of the township into the village of "East Ypsilanti." An election was held on November 13, 1857, and the new village provided with a president and a board of trustees. This arrangement, however, could scarcely prove permanent and a movement was begun for obtaining a city charter for the united villages, many East Siders being among its strongest supporters. Such a charter was approved by the Legislature on February 4, 1858, its validity being conditioned upon its separate adoption by the two village boards. The Ypsilanti Board voted unanimously in favor of the Charter. Sentiment on the East Side was divided. It was urged, for example, that the East Side already had its own fire department, and that when the West Side desired a similar organization, they be taxed to provide the equipment. The East Ypsilanti Board discussed the matter in several sessions but the vote was tied. One trustree, Charles Woodruff, with characteristic independence, persistently refrained from voting, his reason being that the proposed charter granted the city too great freedom in matters of taxation. In this situation a written statement was prepared and signed by a large number of citizens, including all who were likely to have a place in the new government, in which a pledge was made to refrain from abusing the tax privilege until the Legislature had had time to remedy the defect. On this consideration, Woodruff voted afirmatively and, in 1858, the two villages became the united City of Ypsilanti. The charter was properly revised on February 15, 1859.

. . . Mayor Joslin in his inaugural address reported thte estimated population of the city to be five thousand, and, with misguided enthusiasm predicted that that figure would be double in five years. One of the first cares of the new city government was provison for a City Hall and this was built in 1859, near the west end of the Cross Street bridge, where it still stands, fallen indeed from its former dignity. Arden H. Ballard succeeded Joslin as Mayor in 1859.

Addenda: *That 'fallen' structure, noted in the 1922 account, still stands, now as John Pappas' sculpture studio, and will be one of the many highlights of the 1989 Heritage Festival where John and his artisans will be casting commemorations of the 100-year-old Water Tower.*

Next Month: 1860-1869 -Life in the Sixties

No Jazz Competition at this year's Heritage Fest

Financial exigencies required consolidating all of the entertainment and beer tents to one location, according to the Heritage Festival Policy Committee. This followed four months of a short-lived new policy which was to enable the Heritage Jazz Competition and the Country Music Tent in Riverside Park to operate seperate stages each supported by non-profit organizations' beer tents. The Sidetrack Bar & Restaurant had agreed to sponsor the 10th annual Jazz Competition by extending their liquor liability (which had cost DTA up to $1200 a day, previously) and letters of approval for placement of the Jazz Tent in East Cross Street had gone to the Michigan Liquor Control Commission with approval from the DTA, Festival officials, the City and the Chief of Police. But financial strictures and late planning so alarmed the Festival Committee that the new policy was reversed to put all such entertainments - country, jazz, gambling and the beer tent - in one central location in Riverside Park, where DTA will still run the beer concession.

Association officers have decided to cancel their jazzconcept for August, rather than try to meld a neighborhood jazz tradition of ten years with such a variety of other public entertainments.

Other Heritage Fest events on the block

Depot Town will not be barren of activity on August 18, 19, 20, however. The fifth visit of the Michigan Artrain will feature an elegant exhibition of antique toys and many other exhibits related to the toy theme will be spread throughout the Freight House, tents in the middle of the street, and in shop windows.

Antique farm tractors, Early Engine Expo and other events will take place in the Market Plaza on the north side of the district and antique autos will assemble on Frog Island.

Miller Motors' boss, Jack Miller, is coordinating "everything on wheels" for the 11th annual event centering on Depot Town, Riverside Park and Frog Island and DTA treasurer, Judi Monaghan, heads the Artrain.

Festival Ethicals:

Know the rules and procedures and you'll benefit from a quarter million people converging in the district on August 18, 19 & 20:

Authority: City Ordinance establishes that all street activities for the weekend of Heritage weekend are under the auspices and authority of the Festival Committee.

Sidewalk use: Merchants may extend their regular activity to the sidewalks in front of their business, but all other enterprises must be cleared through the Committee, kicking-back a percentage of the profits.

Parking: With street closings and heavy pedestrian traffic in the block, certain selected parking will be reserved for area merchants. Watch for local bulletins with more information on making this both pleasant and profitable for the local clientele.

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NOTICE:

The regular third Thursday August meeting of the Depot Town Association, Inc. is changed to

7:30 p.m., August 3rd,

due to Heritage Festival conflicts. All meetings are open to the public and are held in The Old Caboose at 400 Market Place.

1989 Artrain theme for the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival:

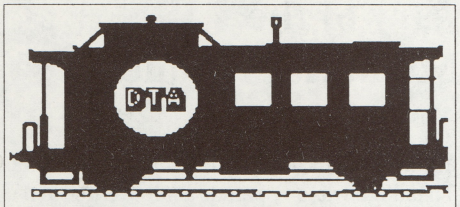
Treasures of Childhood - 150 Years of American Toys

20 toymakers' exhibits at trackside from Cross Street to the Freight House

Model railroad • Radio-controlled airplanes • Radio-controlled cars

Street exhibitions • Farm Toys • Doll show • Bottle Show

Depot Town shop windows will feature antique toys during August



New or renewing DTA members this month:

Don and Bev Shankwiler,David J. Davis

D.T.A. 18 May 1989

Guests: Mark Cotter (Finn's J.M.&J. Ins. Co., Jim Koster (Ypsilanti Public Schools Office of Budget Management), Ron Miller (Heritage Festival Committee Chair).

Minutes: 20 April '89 approved.

Treasurer: No report.

Standing Committees:

Budget/ Events: The names-

Heritage Festival Jazz Competition
Depot Town Winter Jazz Series
Frog Island Music Festival
Frog Island Tent Blues & Jazz Festival
Frog Island Jazz Festival
and Frog Island Festival

have been registered with the Michigan Department of Commerce by the DTA.

The future of Heritage Festival Jazz as proposed by DTA is unccertain due to a change in policy by the Festival Committee. The music's fate is expected to be decided by the policy committee prior to next month's DTA meeting. DTA has submitted a formal request to operate a bar at the Heritage Festival.

Frog Island acts are booked, brochures are out, and TICKETS ARE ON SALE! NancyLynn Sharpless is organizing volunteers and can be reached via The Ark.

The formal agreement of cooperation between DTA and The Ark regarding Frog Island co-sponsorship has been presented to The Ark.

Talks are proceeding in hopes of reviving the Winter Jazz Series.

NIFTY: Travel Michigan, the newsletter of Michigan's travel industry, offers great opportunities to connect with travelers and visitors with the publication of area events and festivals. The newsletter will soon feature free advertising for nonprofit groups promoting Michigan travel.

Rag Report - Form invoices have been introduced to Rag sponsors -- but don't worry, we're still personal enough to hand-deliver and answer your questions. To find out how you can become a Rag sponsor and get your very own official invoice, contact DTA via The Old Caboose, 400 Market Place.

Caboose

Experience the ambience. Rent the caboose for your event. Only $25.00 (w/a $10 key deposit). Contact Gary McKeever @ 483-4256.

2nd Vice Presidents

Merchants - The merchants offered a loan of $150.00 to the DTA to be put toward the DTA's tree sponsorship during the /88-/89 Festival of Lights.

Antique Dealers - as one of DTA umbrella groups, has officially disbande; $150.00 in their account has reverted to the DTA general fund.

Antique Engine Club - knows a good operation when they see it! And so made a generous donation to the Depot Town/ Radisson brochure. The brochure has been developed to highlight Depot Town's attractions for area visitors.

Engineering Society - They're still in business and ready for more. For help w/ your job, contact the Engineeers via The Old Caboose mail slot.

Other business:

Mark Cotter proposed a resumption of last year's **property and liability insurance** for the consideration by the DTA. Mark will meet with DTA treasurer, Judi Monaghan, regarding an audit of attendance figures for last year's Frog Island Festival.

Paul Fetters reports that the **Depot Town DDA** will formally define its boundaries at the next meeting. The DDA will also begin to develop a new Depot Town Master Plan in conjunction with the Ypsilanti Master Plan.

Jim Koster presented a complete outline of issues regarding the economic status of Ypsilanti Public Schools and the upcoming **June 12 elections.**

The DTA has invested $25.00 in membership dues to the **Neighborhood Associations of Michigan.** We hope to send an emmissary to their upcoming conference on demographic and environmental trends (Grand Rapids, June 2, 3.)

DTA also retains membership in the **Washtenaw Council for the Arts** with the payment of $35.00 yearly dues.

DTA will allocate $50.00 to Carol Hansen for the purchase and distribution of **peat moss** for each Cross Street planter upon receipt of a receipt.

Wednesday, May 31, the Ypsilanti Visitors & Convention Bureau will host the **Ann Arbor Convention Bureau** for an afternoon in Depot Town and historic Ypsilanti.

Best Yet Award: The new Freighthouse dock. Take a stroll around and you'll agree.

Golden Goose Award: For the willful destruction of the gracious plantings on our streets.

July 1989

Depot Towners are invited to participate in any or all of the following activities for the good of this old commercial district:

Independence Day Parade
11 a.m., Tuesday, 7/4

Foundation
8 p.m. Thursday, 7/6
in The Old Caboose

Development Authority (DDA)
7:30 p.m. Thursday, 7/13
Freighthouse Coffee Shop

Merchants
5:15 p.m. Thursday, 7/20
at the Old Town Restaurant

Association
7:30 p.m. Thursday, 7/20
in The Old Caboose

Antique Engine Club
7:00 p.m. Thursday 7/27
in the Freighthouse Coffee Shop

THE DEPOT TOWN RAG

A publication of the Depot Town Association, Inc. a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation dedicated to preserving the unique character of the neighborhood and to the enhancement of its business climate.

-Tom Dodd, editor

Depot Town Association, Inc.
Jacob Guter, president
c/o The Old Caboose
400 Market Place
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198

Active Memberships :
- Ypsilanti Chamber of Commerce
- Washtenaw Council for the Arts
- Neighborhood Associations of Michigan

HANSEN'S

STANDARD PRINTING

35 E. Cross Street
Ypsilanti, MI 48198

483-0339

The 'good old days' are still here!

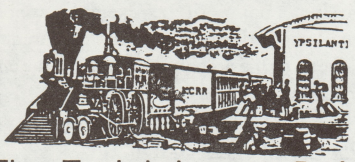
4th of July
Independence Day
Parade & Picnic

60th annual
American Legion
Parade

starts at Recreation Park at 11:30 a.m.,
to Congress,
to Michigan Avenue,
to North Huron Street,
to East Cross Street.

Stops for ceremonies
at Cross Street Bridge

Followed by family
Picnics in The Park,
with parade vehicle display on Frog Island.



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Sat. 9-7; Sun. 12-5
312 North River Street
483-1520

70th Anniversary of the Cross Street Bridge Memorial Plaques

(From the July 5, 1919 Ypsilantian-Press)

TABLETS ARE UNVEILED IN HONOR OF BOYS

Dedication Address Delivered By Prof. Henderson Before Big Audience

K. OF P. AND PAPER MILL FLOATS GET PRIZES

Crown Fender Co., Boy Scouts And Alley Festa Circus Are Other Prize Winners

A large crowd assembled at the Cross St. bridge at 11 a.m. on the 4th to witness the unveiling of the Memorial tablets. The program was in charge of Prof. Arbaugh. Community singing led by Prof. Lindegren accompanied by the band, was followed by the address delivered by Prof. Henderson of Ann Arbor, who stood in the broiling sun and notwithstanding his personal discomfort gave a splendid talk in appreciation of the service which has been rendered by the soldiers and sailors who participated in the great struggle. The unveiling of the tablets was in charge of President McKenny. The affair was attended by a dignity and impressiveness which is the best tribute the public is able to pay for the great service rendered.

Heat Reduces Parade

The parade which started at very near the scheduled time was excellent considering the intense heat of the morning. It was an actual impossibility for pedestrians to join in the march without danger, and only a few brave ones ventured upon it but a large number of decorated automobiles and several very pretty and suggestive floats followed the City Officials, Police Department, Officers of the Patriotic Service League and band, who led the parade. Following came the Boy Scouts, men of the present war, and a representation of the G.A.R. Symbolical floats were provided by the Peninsular, with a presentation of victory, Michigan Ladder company, their own product with images of flag decorations and manned by a large number of returned soldiers, a beautiful symbolical float by the Normal college, the Knights of Pythias, the Crown Fender, a Peace float by St. John's church, a preliminary view of Dempsey and William resting in their respective corners following the first round, which was managed by ex-ring master Richards of Grand Rapids, by the Wiedman Auto Co., various industrial floats and a representation of the manifold attractions of Thompson's Mammoth Shows. That there was any parade at all was due to the great effort which the chairman, E. G. Wiedman put into the affair, and this feature was enjoyed by throngs distributed along the entire line of march. The crowds were very enthusiastic and appreciative.

The exercises of unveiling the tablets immediately followed the parade after which an adjournment was made to the grounds of the Festa which were thrown open at 12 o'clock.

The prizes awarded were as follows: for the most artistic float, the Peninsular Paper company received first prize of $15; for the best representative float, the Knights of Pythias also received $5, and for the second best the Crown Fender received $10; for the largest representation of any organization, the Boy Scouts received $10; for the most comical display, the Alley Festa circus received $10.

YPSI/CONA?

A Coalitions of Neighborhood Associations will have, at least, a short life. After a statewide conference on processes and problems facing neighborhood associations, block clubs and community action, members of both the DTA and the Historic South Side Neighborhood Association convened such groups in Our Town for a June 20th meeting at City Hall.

Future programs for the new group will focus on conducting a neighborhood summary, public safety, closing crack houses, building effective neighborhood organizations, race and ethnic relations and other items in the *street fighting* category.

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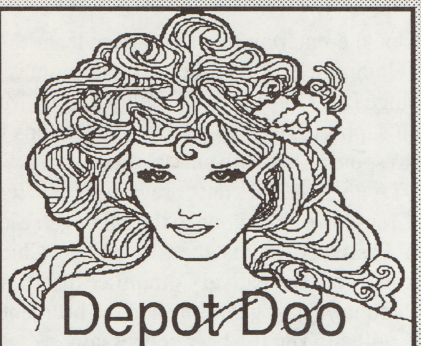
RAGTIME



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Olde Towne Coin & Gold

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482-2010
27 E. Cross

EUROPEAN DRESSMAKERS

In the good old summer time
in good old Depot Town!

July 4th, Tuesday
Independence Day Parade
& picnics in the parks

Wednesday, noon, July 28
Drum Corps rehearsal
in front of Old Town Restaurant

August 18, 19, 20
Ypsilanti Heritage Festival
Over 300,000 people expected!

State Representative
Kirk Profit

invites you to his annual

4th of July Picnic

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483-3637

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20 East Cross Street

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Hon's Flowers & Fancies
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